

SCOTLAND'S STORY

36

**The Golden Age
when Scotland
dazzled the world**

**Earth's secrets in
a Highland glen**

**Men of genius
who sparked The
Enlightenment**

**Hardships of a
life underground**

**The designs that
separated your
friends and foes**



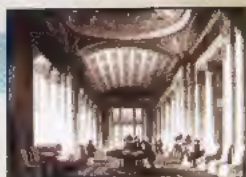
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1680

The Advocates Library, a key Enlightenment institution, is founded in Edinburgh.



1726

Geologist James Hutton is born.



1728

Birth of technological pioneer Joseph Black.



1736

Great steam innovator James Watt is born.



1735

William Adam begins Duff House in Banff.



1757

David Hume remarks on Scotland's pre-eminence in Enlightenment Europe.



1742

Bookseller-printer Robert Foulis is a key supporter of Glasgow's Enlightenment.



1767

James Craig wins competition to design Edinburgh's New Town.



1777

Robert Adam begins building of Culzean Castle, in Ayrshire.



**In Part 37:
The Ossian
phenomenon**



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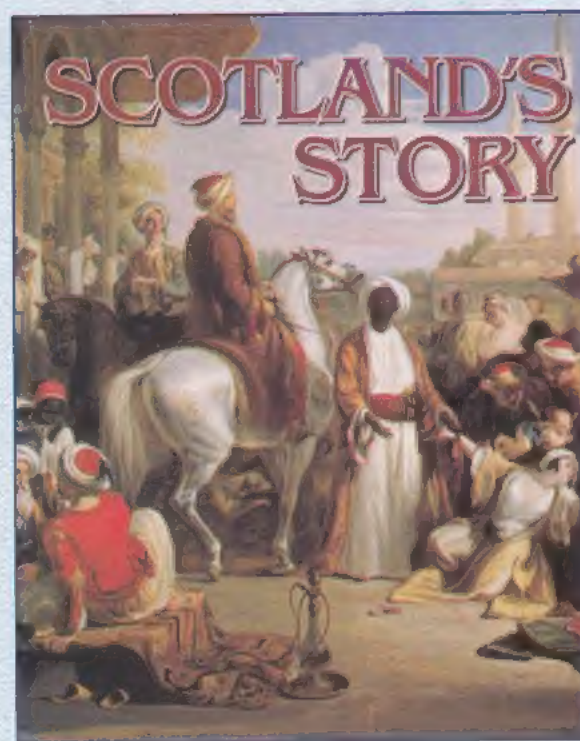
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COVER: Art flourished in 18th and 19th century Scotland. William Allan's 'Slave Market Constantinople' (1838) is an early example of European orientalism.

A hotbed of genius

If the later modern period can be characterised by the dominance of themes such as science and technology, markets and industry – and society and secularisation – then it can be said to have originated with a 'golden age' in European history known as the Enlightenment.

The Enlightenment is crucial to Scotland's story because, without question, the nation's contribution to the movement was genuine, lasting, distinctive and – in the course of world history – of fundamental significance.

One example we shall return to later, Adam Smith, shattered over 200 years of economic thinking by postulating the revolutionary concept of 'society'.

This was a huge system in whose mechanisms all people participated and whose central component was 'the market'.

It is inconceivable to talk of the state of the world today without acknowledging Smith's ideas.

But Smith's thought didn't spring out of nowhere. Nor did that of contemporaries such as David Hume, James Hutton or James Watt – Scots whose contributions to modern philosophy, science and technology are of equally worldwide

significance. It has often been assumed that the Union of 1707 somehow caused Scotland's 18th century explosion of genius, a view encouraged by the fact that the Enlightenment Scots were deeply concerned with addressing the implications of Union.

In reality, however, the Scottish Enlightenment was the product of a long-established native intellectual tradition – founded largely on the work of Renaissance Scots scholars of international renown such as John Mair, Hector Boece and George Buchanan.

Within a few miles of the drinking clubs of polite Edinburgh society lay the dark side of Enlightenment Scotland. This was the coal mines and salt manufactories of the Forth basin, hell holes of darkness and despair for thousands of ordinary Scots.

Bound in slavery, known as 'serfdom', to their masters, these collier and salter families had to work in desperate and dangerous conditions for a pittance.

Their story, one of great suffering, is at least as 'worthy' and important as that of the sons of ministers and lairds who had the chance to excel in Scotland's Enlightenment universities.

Brilliant starburst

The 'Golden Age' of Scotland should not have come as a surprise - and it was certainly not as a direct result of the 1707 Union.

David Hume, usually better known for scepticism than for exaggeration, told his friend Gilbert Elliott in 1757 that Scotland's recent achievements were truly amazing. He wrote:

"Really it is admirable how many Men of Genius this Country produces at present. Is it not strange that, at a time when we have lost our Princes, our Parliaments, our independent Government, even the Presence of our chief Nobility, are unhappy, in our Accent and Pronunciation, speak a very corrupt Dialect of the Tongue which we make use of; is it not strange, I say, that in these Circumstances we shou'd really be the People most distinguish'd for Literature in Europe?"

Ever since the 1760s, this admiration for what has become known as the Scottish Enlightenment has continued undimmed. The second half of the 18th century seems nothing less than the nation's golden age, a brilliant period when reputable opinion considered that the Scots led the world in human progress.

"It is from Scotland", exclaimed Voltaire, the great French commentator, "that we receive rules of taste in all the arts."

The concerns of historians have tended to reflect Hume's sense of surprise. After all, it was indeed strange that the Scots should have emerged at the forefront of European culture only following the Treaty of Union.

Many of the philosopher's



of native talent

■ **Cliff-top majesty:** Ayrshire's Culzean Castle dramatically overlooks the Firth of Clyde. It is one of architect Robert Adam's finest works. The picture shows one of his drawings of the north front with its imposing round tower. The south front was created around the Medieval home of the Kennedy family.



friends, staunchly pro-Unionist, found it easy to believe that increasing English influence was the most plausible explanation. Yet whilst this interpretation has merits, what was happening to the nation's culture during the 18th century also seems to have rested substantially on native foundations.

Recent research has emphasised how the Scottish Enlightenment was actually the culmination of centuries of indigenous cultural development in their own country. It was not simply just another benevolent by-product of the Anglo-Scottish Treaty.

The Renaissance is now seen as crucial. Philosophers and historians such as John Mair, Hector Boece and George Buchanan were internationally-known in the 16th century.

Scotland's universities – St Andrews, Glasgow, Edinburgh and the two Aberdeen colleges all existed by 1600 – had nurtured fruitful cultural connections with Europe since the 15th century.

Meanwhile, an independent tradition of Scots law, raised to new heights of intellectual originality by Viscount Stair's *Institutions of the Laws of Scotland* (1681), had evolved over centuries – this also survived the Union unaltered.

So did a Presbyterian Church of Scotland. Entirely different from the Anglicanism in the south, it provided attractive careers to intelligent and ambitious Scots, continuing after 1707 to underpin the nation's distinctive religious and educational culture.

Other pre-Union developments also provided pointers. Several recent Scots, for example, had already attained scientific eminence. The courtier Sir Robert Moray helped found London's Royal Society in the 1660s; Sir Robert Sibbald, a Fife landowner, made contributions to medicine, botany and archaeology; several members of the Gregory family at Aberdeen, Edinburgh and Oxford were among the first teachers of Sir Isaac Newton's experimental science.

The establishment of Edinburgh's Advocates' Library in the 1680s, inspired by the Lord Advocate, Sir George Mackenzie of Rosehaugh, not only provided a major national

With parliament removed from Edinburgh, the professional communities rapidly began to dominate

► research institution (Hume himself was the librarian by the 1750s), but again signalled a greater receptiveness in later Stuart Scotland to academic study and to new ideas.

This, then, was the already promising environment in which the Union was enacted. Yet it is important to acknowledge that the constitutional events of 1707 did have unexpected cultural spin-offs for the Scots.

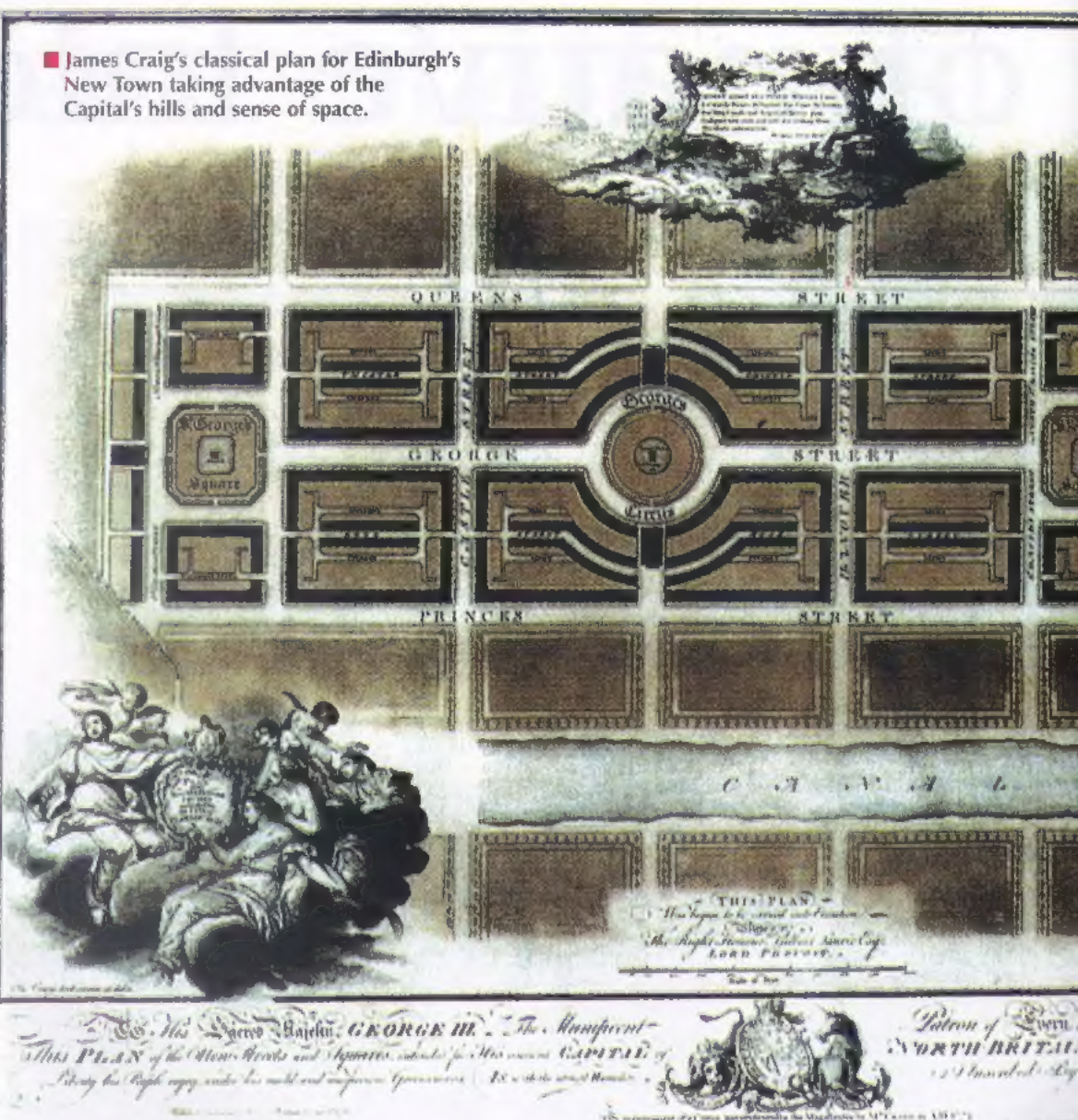
With the factionalised parliamentarians banished from Edinburgh, the more coherent and intellectually-vibrant professional communities – the lawyers, the academics and the clergy – rapidly began to dominate.

Successive British governments also strove to draw the sting of Scotland's previously turbulent religious life. Gradually they engineered a more relaxed atmosphere, converting increasing numbers of ministers (notably the so-called 'Moderates' like William Robertson, Hugh Blair and Alexander 'Jupiter' Carlyle) into successful authors and turning the Church of Scotland for the first time from persecution to toleration.

Furthermore, the economic prosperity which followed the treaty and the access to America and India, which it granted the Scots, helped mould a wealthy, confident and ambitious commercial community and landed elite.

As consumers through the rapid expansion in publishing, but also as enthusiastic participants and generous patrons in cultural activity, the educated and inquisitive members of these prosperous classes in effect made Enlightenment a social reality.

The clubs and societies which emerged in the post-Union period also provided vital infrastructural support. Bodies like Aberdeen's Philosophical Society (known as the 'Wise Club' with its academic leaders) and the capital's Select Society (Hume was a founding member) were by the 1760s debating overtly political questions



such as taxation, slavery and women's education, acquiring almost a 'para-parliamentary' role in the process.

But they devoted themselves mainly to discussing a range of cultural issues, providing opportunities for Scots to engage directly with developments in history, philosophy, science and literature.

These institutions showed just how much Scotland's cultural expectations were being re-fashioned and extended by increased contact with England. Joseph Addison's 'The Spectator' (1711-12), with its seductive offer to give its readers "such sound and wholesome Sentiments, as shall have a good Effect on their Conversation", was ragingly popular in the decades after the Union, with numerous reprints and copyists in Scotland.

Addison even claimed that the

polite sociability which he promoted would help achieve the 'wearing out of Ignorance, Passion, and Prejudice'.

And if meeting and intelligent conversation did indeed make people more rational, more knowledgeable and more tolerant, then attending clubs and participating in cultural activity promised to allow post-Union Scots finally to put behind them the political violence and religious bigotry of the previous centuries and to emerge improved into a new age of politeness, learning and Enlightenment.

The Scottish Enlightenment was thus a potent fusion of many disparate forces which converged in the 18th century and which allowed educated and respectable Scots – 'North Britons' as some now thought of themselves – to forge ahead in creating a dynamic literary,



► Banffshire's Duff House is another splendid example of neo-classical architecture.

scientific and intellectual life for themselves. It is no surprise that Scottish literature was so strongly stimulated, since the possibility of increased anglicisation after 1707 set great creative challenges.

Allan Ramsay, poet and Jacobite, was a key early figure. His work, particularly 'The Gentle Shepherd'



(1725), addressed native subjects and employed vernacular Scots. Yet his characters also reflected the growing public interest in polite sociability.

Later literature still betrayed these tensions. The popular novels of Tobias Smollett and Henry Mackenzie (the 'Scottish Addison') strove to capture a British market through psychological explorations of human sociability. The forged Gaelic translations of James 'Ossian' Macpherson, meanwhile, not only harked back to a lost Celtic heroic past but, inevitably alerting the suspicions of the more observant, cast ancient warriors in an attractively polite light.

History was also a major area of activity, an interest in past societies, and how modern people had emerged from them, reflecting the dramatic political and economic changes taking place in contemporary Scotland. Adam

Smith's famous 'Wealth of Nations' (1776), Hume's 'History of England' (1754-62), the best-selling works of Robertson, the writings of Adam Ferguson, who wrote an early sociological study, and the legal histories produced by judges like Lord Kames and Lord Hailes, gave real substance to Hume's claim that his was 'the historical age' and Scotland 'the historical nation'.

Scientific achievements multiplied in Scotland. Colin Maclaurin, Fellow of the Royal Society at 22, neatly reconciled Newton's new system of cosmology with a belief in God as Creator of a mechanical universe.

Three generations of professors, each named Alexander Munro, helped make Edinburgh a world leader in medical education.

Chemists William Cullen and Joseph Black, and James Hutton the geologist, also extended a growing national reputation for invention and discovery. Black's support of the young Glaswegian James Watt, legendary inventor of the steam condenser, confirmed this trend.

Philosophy inevitably seems overshadowed by Hume, whose controversial works doubted everything for which no reason or evidence could be found. But more influential at the time, indeed well into the next century, was the more comforting tradition founded by Francis Hutcheson, Smith's old professor at Glasgow, and later taken up by Thomas Reid at Aberdeen and Glasgow and Dugald Stewart at Edinburgh.

This argued that there existed in human nature a 'moral sense', an infallible guide to behaviour and, subsequently, in response to Hume's elaborate arguments, made forceful claims on behalf of 'common sense'.

Eighteenth-century Scotland also produced great painters, capable of breath-taking realistic portraits – William Aikman, Allan Ramsay (the poet's son) and Henry Raeburn captured for posterity the leading figures of the age in images which cleverly exploited the philosophers, theories about the operations of the eyes and the brain.

Meanwhile, in works such as Hopetoun House, Duff House, Edinburgh's Charlotte Square, and Culzean Castle, members of the Adam dynasty, notably the father William and his brilliant son Robert, steadily pushed neo-classical architecture to its limits.

Incorporating ever more imaginative historical references (notably Gothic and Grecian) and providing specialised



■ **Advocates' Close, Edinburgh.** It was typical of the narrow wynds in the Old Town before the open spaces of the New Town lured away many well-off inhabitants.

accommodation for a range of social functions, these stunning projects perfectly captured the unprecedented wealth, self-confidence and intellectual vision of the age.

The wider impact of the Scottish Enlightenment was enduring, though often in unexpected ways. The 'Scotch philosophy' shaped the 19th-century curriculum in Europe and North America. Scottish historical and political thought influenced the American revolutionaries. Smith and Ferguson fascinated the Marxists and inspired modern economics, sociology and anthropology.

Ossian, notwithstanding the grave doubts over authenticity, captivated Napoleon and the German Romantics. And Sir Walter Scott, the best-known product of late-Enlightenment Edinburgh, achieved immortality by retailing sentimentalised evocations of Scotland to an entranced international audience.

In this sense, Scotland's modern image in the wider world as a land of history, romance and heroism, but also the flattering impression of the Scots as a nation of scientists, inventors, doctors, educators, writers, and philosophers, is itself the living legacy of the Scottish Enlightenment. ●

TIMELINE

1680

The Advocate's Library builds on a great Scottish tradition of learning established at the Renaissance.

1707

Removal of parliament helps lawyers, academics and clergy to dominate intellectual life.

1730

Francis Hutcheson assumes chair of moral philosophy at Glasgow University.

1749

Glasgow begins to establish unrivalled international reputation for fine printing of classical literature.

1752

Glasgow Literary Society established as a forum for intellectual discussion.

1754

The philosopher-historian David Hume begins his multi-volume History of England.

1755

Hutcheson's System of Moral Philosophy is published.

1759

William Robertson publishes his History of Scotland. Ten years later he releases a history of Emperor Charles V.

1767

Adam Ferguson's History of Civil Society is the foundation of the discipline of sociology.

1776

Adam Smith's Wealth of Nations establishes him as an economist of world stature.

1785

James Hutton's A Theory of the Earth is basis of modern geology.



■ Men at work: Hutton and assistant John Clerk (who made the sketch), accompanied as always by his dog Missy, search the rocks for answers.

Geologist who found how the earth works

'No vestige of a beginning, no prospect of an end', wrote James Hutton. And some of his answers were discovered up a Highland glen

James Hutton (1726-97) was a friend and associate of the men at the centre of Scotland's most extraordinary burst of intellectual energy – the movement that has come to be known as the Scottish Enlightenment. He gave geological expression to some of the movement's key ideas.

Hutton's early interests had been in farming (he was an avid agricultural improver), in chemistry (he ran successful salammoniac works), and in canal building (he was a director of the Forth and Clyde Canal Company).

These activities had all, in various ways, prompted an interest in the structure of the earth and in the processes that have developed into a systematic project for establishing how the earth works. But what

methods could he use in such a grand project? As an associate of the men of the Enlightenment, who met in Edinburgh's convivial clubs and societies, he thoroughly accepted the fundamental principle that knowledge should be based on the findings of science, not the blind acceptance of traditional authority.

Furthermore, he shared their general distaste for religion and their scepticism concerning the supposed truths of the Bible.

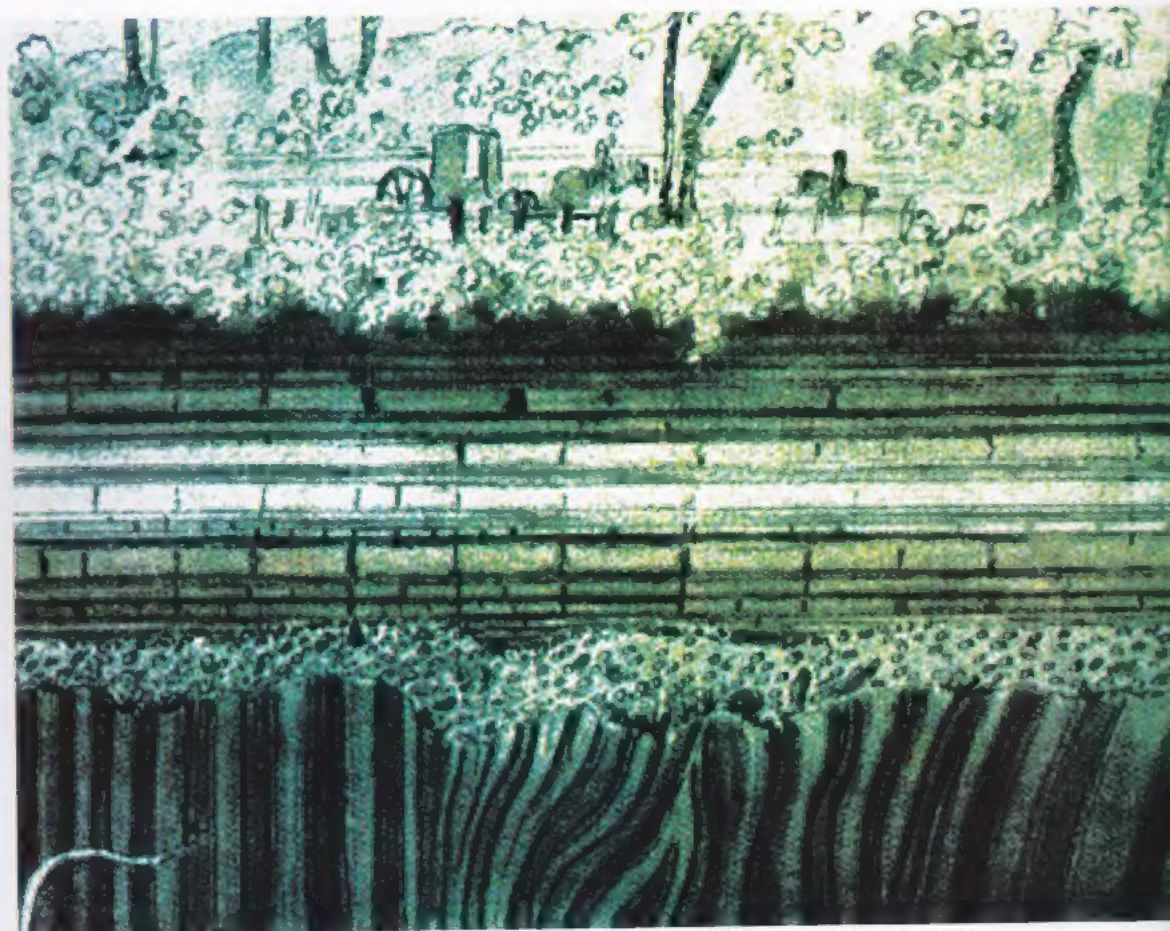
He was not a Christian. If he had any belief at all in a god, it was in a remote god whose sole act has been to design and build a universe that runs like clockwork, regulated by immutable scientific laws that require no further heavenly intervention.

How do these two related

principles – first, that all knowledge must be testable, scientific knowledge; and second, that the Bible is unreliable – work when Hutton applied them to his projects for establishing the forces that have shaped the earth?

Hutton's project ran counter to the dominant 18th-century conception of earth history. A good deal of powerful observational evidence of the way in which the earth is constructed had led geologists to propose that the earth's history has been directional.

The earth is in a one-way journey: it cannot be returned to the state it was in ages ago. It has cooled, irreversibly, from a molten state, and the earliest stages of its history are characterised by violent cataclysms and volcanic eruptions that produced



■ At Jedburgh Hutton showed millions of years between vertical beds of schist and horizontal sandstone.

the earth's most ancient rocks.

The present, by contrast, is generally tranquil. The earth has calmed. The directional account of earth history was supported by some persuasive geological evidence, but it is important, too, that it happens to accord fairly well with the account of the formation of the world given in the book of Genesis – as long as a reasonably relaxed interpretation of the literal seven days of creation and of Noah's flood was taken.

Hutton had two objections to this way of picturing the history of earth. First, he was not disposed to believe conditions on earth were once so different from those we can see at work in the landscape today.

How could the science of geology ever get properly started, he thought, if it gave pride of place to the operation of forces that we can't actually observe?

Secondly, he was ill-disposed to the records of scripture, especially when they invoke supernatural inventions by God. He insisted the geological explanations should admit neither the unrepeatable nor the supernatural (or 'preternatural' as it was termed in the 18th century):

'There is no occasion for having recourse to any unnatural supposition of evil, to any



■ James Hutton as portrayed by artist Henry Raeburn.

destructive accident in nature, or to the agency of any preternatural cause, in explaining that which actually appears'.

No, the geologist should frame explanations that are entirely naturalistic and which are derived entirely from close observation of the forces that are presently at work. This requires a formidable leap of the scientific imagination.

How, for example, can we be convinced that the action of a small, burbling stream has been sufficient to carve out the valley in which it

runs? We will be convinced, said Hutton, when we fully grasp the immensity of time in which the gentle eroding action of the stream has been operating. 'Time', he wrote 'is to nature endless and as nothing'.

So, if we minutely observe the way in which natural forces are modifying the present-day landscape, and if we acknowledge the limitless time that they have had in which to do their work, we can fully explain the geological past.

What we will find is that the surface of the earth, for as far back in the past as our researchers can reach, has continuously been shaped and reshaped by balanced forces of erosion, which grind continents down to dust and carry them to the sea, and forces of volcanic uplift, which upheave the ocean sediments into new landmasses.

In pursuit of his vision Hutton went on lengthy, exhausting field trips, applying his theories to actual geological sites. 'Pity the arse that's clagged to a head that will hunt stones', the saddle-sore geologist wrote from Wales.

Two sites in Scotland gave him especial pride in demonstrating the persuasiveness of his vision. One was near Jedburgh, where he found a bank on the River Jed that exposed a sequence of rocks he interpreted as

records of the successive transformation of the Borders landscape from ocean to land, back to ocean, and then back to land again, all requiring no more than the agents of destruction and renewal observable in the world, acting over immense periods of time.

The other site was in Glen Tilt in Perthshire. His scientific rivals had argued granite is an ancient rock, formed during the earth's dawning and not produced since. Granite, they argued, was evidence of the unrepeatable of the earth's history.

What Hutton needed, therefore, was evidence, that the production of granite is one of the regular operations of nature. To supply this evidence he had to find a sequence of rocks in which granite appeared later than adjacent rocks that had been laid down beneath oceans. He found the sequence he was looking for in Glen Tilt, and shouted so jubilantly his local guides thought he had discovered gold.

The researches of the geologist, Hutton concluded, uncover "no vestige of a beginning – no prospect of an end".

What they establish is an earth with an endless past and an endless future, structured, at every point in its history by balanced forces of destruction and renewal. ●

Men of genius seen with every glance

■ David Hume towered even on the European stage and was sceptical of everything that could not be proved.



Remarkable it may have been, a confidence boost most certainly, but this flowering of Scottish talent was hardly a major surprise

The 18th century in Scotland was one of the great periods of human achievement, comparable to the Athens of Pericles or the Florence of the Renaissance. It was rich in innovative thought which introduced fundamental changes in the way people everywhere regarded both the physical world and human society.

There were, Walter Scott said, 'giants in the land' – such men as David Hume (1711-76) and Thomas Reid (1710-96) in philosophy, Adam Ferguson (1723-1816) in sociology, Adam Smith (1723-90) in economics and moral philosophy, James Hutton (1726-97) in geology, William Cullen (1710-90) and Joseph Black (1728-99) in chemistry, William Robertson (1721-93) and David Hume again in the writing of history, Henry Home, Lord Kames (1696-1782) in a great variety of subjects from literary criticism and law to agriculture.

Many modern academic disciplines virtually take their origin from the work of these men. That was not all. This was also the age of the poetry of Robert Fergusson and Robert Burns; the architecture of Robert Adam; the portraits of Allan Ramsay and Henry Raeburn; the beginning of the Edinburgh medical



■ Edinburgh's Advocates' Library became recognised by scholars, including historian Thomas Carlyle, as the national library of Scotland.

school; James Boswell's 'Journal'; and of James Hume's 'History of the Steam Engine' on the steam engine, a source of the industrial revolution and of the locomotives which circled the globe in the course of the following century.

The first historian to attempt to explain this "burst of genius", as Dugald Stewart who saw Adam Ferguson as Professor of Moral Philosophy in 1785. He attributed it to the "constant intercourse of Scotland" which had been "from time immemorial".

It is certainly true that the Scottish tradition of studying and teaching in Continental universities had kept Scotland for centuries in the mainstream of European thought. But there was a special reason – the importance of education in Scotland since the

Middle Ages and particularly after the Reformation.

John Knox's 'First Book of Discipline' of 1561 proposed the establishment of a school in every parish, a high school in every town and a university in the major cities.

For the next 200 years the Scottish Parliament and the General Assembly of the Kirk worked to achieve this and before long the mass of the people in Scotland were probably the best educated in the world.

The Kirk in Scotland gave more weight to reasoned discourse than to ritual and this encouraged habits of metaphysical speculation. There was a strong tradition of historical and philosophical writing in Scotland from the Middle Ages.

As stated in the Oxford Companion to Philosophy "The Scottish universities had, until recently a traditional reverence for philosophy, which was compulsory ▶



■ Thomas Reid a minister's son who became professor of philosophy at Aberdeen (1751) and moral philosophy at Glasgow (1766).

In his letters from London, David Hume referred to the 'barbarians' who live on the banks of the Thames

► for every degree. There was no idea of exclusive specialisation, let alone that the best results require it. The policy of non-specialisation allowed Hume, Smith and Reid, at the traditions high point, to variously combine psychology, moral philosophy, optics, mechanics, economics, history and jurisprudence. Philosophy and science were taken to be one."

There was, in fact, nothing sudden about the burst of genius. As one leading authority has written: "The Scottish Enlightenment was the natural, almost the inevitable, outcome of several centuries of Scottish and European intellectual history."

The men who made the Scottish Enlightenment were all products of this educational system. (They were all men because women were still excluded from higher education.)

They reflected the wide approach to learning, which another recent authority described as the 'Democratic Intellect'.

It was democratic in two senses. It was an education open to all and it regarded all aspects of learning as important and inter-related.

The Union of 1707 had left Scotland largely autonomous in everything except the power to make new laws. The institutions which remained Scottish, the Church, the legal and educational systems and local government, affected people much more than a distant and largely inactive Parliament.

The literati of the Enlightenment were educated in one of these institutions, the universities, and usually found careers there or in the Church or the law.

David Hume, for instance, began to study for a legal career at Edinburgh University, but then decided to devote himself to literature, by which he meant philosophy and history.

He lived for a time in France where he completed his first book,

'A Treatise of Human Nature' in 1740.

He returned to Scotland, but failed to secure a chair in Edinburgh University in 1744. For a time he was a tutor to a nobleman and then secretary to a general on a military expedition.

He again failed to secure a university chair (this time in Glasgow), but he was appointed as Librarian of the Advocates' Library in Edinburgh, a post which was

useful for research for his 'History of England'.

He then, surprisingly, became Secretary to the British Embassy in Paris, where he was much cultivated by philosophical and literary society.

For two years he then worked for the Government in London as Under-Secretary of the Northern Department. There he does not seem to have been entirely happy, because in his letters he was given to referring to "the Barbarians who live

on the banks of the Thames"

Finally, he returned to Edinburgh where, as he said, he found "every blessing of consequence".

He delighted in the society of his friends, including Adam Smith who was close at hand in Kirkcaldy.

James Boswell expected to find him, as a sceptic in religion, troubled by the thought of his approaching death, but failed to disturb his composure. When Hume died in 1776, Adam Smith said that



■ Men of science, including James Watt and Alexander Nasmyth, at an imaginary gathering of great Scottish



Enlightenment figures in the Royal Institution – a renowned 19th century centre for learning. This painting dates from 1858.

he approached “as nearly to the idea of perfectly wise and virtuous as perhaps the nature of human frailty will permit”

Hume's employment by the Government in Paris and London was exceptional among his contemporaries. Most of them seldom left Scotland, except those who were engaged as tutors to noblemen on the Grand Tour, as Smith was by the 3rd Duke of Buccleuch.

Smith also was exceptional in

being educated after Glasgow University at Oxford (which he compared favourably to the Scottish universities).

Among the literati who were ministers of the Church of Scotland, the most prominent, and leader of the moderates in the General Assembly, was William Robertson.

He was the son of a minister of Borthwick in Midlothian. Robertson studied at Edinburgh University and himself became a minister in

Edinburgh and eventually Principal of the University. He published his History of Scotland in 1759 and that of Charles V in 1769, but his history of the Americas was not finished before his death in 1793.

It was Robertson's work (as well as his own) which had prompted Hume to say that “this is the historical Age and this the historical Nation”, and “the People most distinguished for literature in Europe”.

Thomas Reid was another son of a

minister who became a minister himself. He became Professor of Philosophy in Aberdeen in 1751 and then succeeded Adam Smith to the chair in Glasgow in 1764. He was the leading critic of Hume and the founder of the Common Sense school of philosophy, which was widely influential in Scotland and Europe, especially in France.

Adam Ferguson, another minister who became a Professor of Moral Philosophy (at Edinburgh) was an ►

► adherent of this school. His 'Essay on the History of Civil Society' (1767) was the foundation of sociology as an academic discipline. He was a native Gaelic speaker who served as the chaplain to the Black Watch.

It was in his house in Edinburgh that the schoolboy Walter Scott met Robert Burns.

Henry Home was called to the Bar in 1723 and raised to the Bench as Lord Kames in 1752. He was the most conspicuous example both of Walter Scott's doctrine that a good lawyer had to be a man of all round learning and of the versatility of the Scottish Enlightenment.

The range of his books prompted Voltaire's remark that if you wanted to know the rules of anything, from epic poetry to gardening, you had to go to Edinburgh to learn them.

Home was one of the hosts of Benjamin Franklin during his visit to Scotland, and it was to him that Franklin wrote that the six weeks which he spent there were the time of 'the densest Happiness' that he had ever experienced.

William Cullen studied medicine at Edinburgh and set up a practice in Glasgow where he lectured on chemistry in the University, the first such post in Britain. He then held chairs in medicine in Glasgow (from 1751) and Edinburgh (from 1756) but continued to stress the importance of chemistry as a subject in its own right and one that was useful to agriculture and industry.

Joseph Black was one of Cullen's pupils and assistants who succeeded him in both the Glasgow and Edinburgh chairs. Black evolved the theory of latent heat. Together these two men established chemistry as a scientific discipline.

James Hutton was another student of medicine (at Edinburgh, Paris and Leiden) who turned to chemistry and agriculture and then to mineralogy and geology. His researches revealed that the earth was immensely older than had been supposed and his book, 'A Theory of the Earth' (1785) is the basis of modern geology.

These men of the Scottish Enlightenment shared many characteristics in common. They all had the wide approach of the Democratic Intellect and they all believed that advances in knowledge should be applied to the improvement of industry, agriculture and society generally. Because Scotland is a small country they were mostly in close



The precocious James Craig planned Edinburgh's classical New Town – the ultimate physical expression of the Scottish Enlightenment – on a wind-swept green ridge facing the Castle.

contact and on terms of friendship.

Adam Ferguson was a cousin, as well as the biographer, of Joseph Black. James Hutton was a friend and a close companion of both Black and Smith. Black was Hume's doctor in his last illness and Smith was his literary executor.

They were clubbable, convivial and social. Neil McCallum said "this momentous generation was in constant converse with itself", and that James Watt's workshop was "a kind of academy whither all the notabilities of Glasgow repaired, to discuss the nicest questions in art, science and literature."

You could say the same of the clubs which were an important part of the social and intellectual life of Edinburgh. Hugh Blair devoted one

of his sermons, 'On the Happiness of a Future State', to life after death.

It sounds very much like one of these clubs: "The intercourse we here maintain with one's fellows is a source of our chief enjoyments."

It was a very accessible society. As Amyat, the King's chemist, said in a famous passage: "In Edinburgh, the access of men of parts is not only easy, but their conversation and the communication of their knowledge are at once imparted to add to intelligent strangers with the utmost liberality."

This is one of the reasons why the literati were so influential. Their clubs included landowners, lawyers, merchants and ministers as well as the philosophers and men of letters. New ideas and practical experience

were in constant interchange.

They were, by and large, a generation that after the last Jacobite Rising of 1745 concluded that there was no escape from the Union and there was little alternative to acceptance of a situation which you could not change.

That did not stop Hume, Ferguson and Smith expressing discreetly their agreement with Andrew Fletcher, that the independence of a diversity of small nations was more conducive to happiness and progress than their assimilation into large states.

John Millar – the Glasgow law professor and opponent of the slave trade – noted that small states tended to have a free constitution, but that large ones were liable to become despotic. ●

A gleam in Glasgow

The thinker: James Watt won fame for his work on steam engines, but the Greenock-born engineer's mind was full of other innovative ideas

Piety and profit may still have been priorities, but Enlightenment in Glasgow projected men of intellect onto a platform of European greatness



During the 18th century, Glasgow was known for its thriving commerce and its strict Presbyterian piety. For most of this century, the population remained smaller than that of Edinburgh.

It was also a prettier and less polluted town than Amsterdam. The university was not the stately complex that now overlooks the newer, west side of the city. It was a fortress-like edifice that faced the bustling High Street in the 18th century.

With its handsome clock tower, courtyard, and lovely gardens, the university looked like the Renaissance establishment that it was. It was here, above all, that the Glasgow Enlightenment flourished.

The tone was set by an Irishman

with Scottish roots. Francis Hutcheson assumed the professorship of moral philosophy in 1730 and immediately began to attract a large following among students who were touched by his passionate eloquence as a moralist.

His disciple William Leechman, who became professor of divinity in 1744 and principal of the college in 1761, recalled in the biographical preface to his mentor's posthumous *System of Moral Philosophy* (1755) that those who heard Hutcheson's lectures on virtue and benevolence 'were charmed with the lovely forms and panted to be what they beheld'.

The university that Hutcheson helped to mould was staunchly Whig and Presbyterian in outlook, but its intellectual roots lay deeply embedded in the Greek and Roman

classics. Hutcheson himself was a respected classicist who wrote course compends in Latin, even though he did most of his writing and lecturing in English.

He drew heavily upon ancient philosophers, and particularly the Stoics, for the moral ammunition he needed to fight the 'selfish' systems of Hobbes and Mandeville.

The professor of mathematics in his day, Robert Simson, had an international reputation for his work on classical geometry, and the chairs of Latin (or Humanity, as it was then called) and Greek came to be filled by two of Hutcheson's brightest and most accomplished protégés, George Muirhead and James Moor.

The Glasgow Enlightenment's identification with Hutcheson and his disciples, and with classical learning, was reinforced by the

bookseller-printer Robert Foulis. He had also studied with Hutcheson, who provided inspiration and financial support for his celebrated press. Hutcheson and Moor's heavily annotated translation of the *'Meditations of Marcus Aurelius'*, which appeared in 1742, was one of Foulis's first major publications.

During the course of his 35-year career, Foulis – in partnership with his brother Andrew for most of that time – printed more editions by Hutcheson than by any other author, followed in order by Cicero, Milton, Moor, Addison, and Leechman.

In the 1750s the Glasgow professors joined forces with the Foulis brothers to publish acclaimed editions of the Latin classics, such as the handsome four-volume folio edition of Homer that was carefully edited by Muirhead and Moor. ▶

► (1756-58, Moore's new volume Greek and Latin edition of Herodotus (1761), and Simson's editions of Apollonius of Perga (1749) and Euclid's Elements, 1756

Thanks to these and other collaborative efforts Glasgow gained an unrivalled international reputation for fine printing of the classics. The printing press became closely associated with Hutton and his colleagues at the university.

That association was further cemented by the physical location of the Foulis press within the college. In the same building that the Foulis brothers established in 1753 continued for almost a quarter of a century as a training ground for painters, sculptors, engravers, and industrial designers, including some major artists such as David Allan.

Another institution associated with Glasgow University was the type foundry which the university built for Alexander Wilson during the early 1760s. Wilson provided type for the Foulis brothers, as well as for the presses of many other printers in Scotland, England, and Ireland.

Around this time the university also built an astronomical observatory, and Wilson was soon appointed the first professor of practical astronomy. The necessity of fixing and cleaning astronomical instruments that were bequeathed to the university by an alumnus in the West Indies led to the employment of James Watt, a young craftsman who was Muirhead's relation.

Asked to fix a model of a Newcomen pumping engine used for class demonstrations, Watt realized that the introduction of a separate

condenser would greatly improve the engine's efficiency, so began the process that would eventually produce the double-acting self-regulating steam engines that powered the mature Industrial Revolution.

For some time Watt maintained his workshop and living quarters in the college, and students with an interest in science and technology regularly congregated there to discuss a wide range of scientific and technological issues. The Foulis book and print shop, the Foulis academy, the astronomical observatory, and James Watt's workshop shared a common commitment to the 'arts', as that word was commonly used in the 18th century, to mean both the fine arts and the mechanical arts.

These institutions also had close ties to the natural sciences, and the university's lecturers in chemistry and professors of natural philosophy encouraged the tendency to mix scientific knowledge with practical, commercial applications.

William Cullen and Joseph Black, for example, were interested not only in philosophical chemistry but also in chemistry as a handmaiden to medicine and, more unusually, as an applied industrial science with practical implications for commercial processes such as bleaching, brewing, and soap-making.

Similarly, John Anderson lectured to his natural philosophy students on the usefulness of science in bringing about 'all those improvements in our habitations, manufactures, and machines which render polished society so comfortable, by supplying our wants, and by diminishing our labours'.

No other 18th-century university could equal Glasgow in this tendency to join science and technology, learning and commerce, the theoretical and the 'hands on'.

In a letter of 1808, the 11th Earl of Buchan reminisced about the time he had passed as a student at the University of Glasgow as a young man. "I visited Glasgow in the year 1767", he wrote, and "attended the Lectures of your worthy Leechman, of Adam Smith, Joseph Black, John Anderson, and John Millar, a Groupe not equalled in their Departments at that time at any University in the world".

He was probably right. Adam Smith - yet another grateful student of 'the never-to-be-forgotten Dr Hutton', as Smith once put it - would gain contemporary acclaim as a moral philosopher and lasting fame as a political economist.

His successor in the moral philosophy chair, Thomas Reid, was the prime mover behind the



Joseph Black became famous for his work in chemistry, but he was also an inspiring lecturer. He is shown in this contemporary illustration.

influential 'common sense' school of philosophy that sought to refute the epistemological scepticism of Edinburgh's greatest philosopher, David Hume.

John Millar, who occupied the chair of civil law throughout the last four decades of the 18th century, single-handedly transformed Glasgow University into a liberal arts centre for legal education.

In 1792 the professors established the Glasgow Literary Society as a forum for intellectual discourse. At weekly meetings held at the college

while the term was in session, the members delivered discourses on various topics or debated questions of general interest.

The club's activities were dominated by the faculty and others affiliated with the college, such as the Foulis brothers, but the membership also included liberal-minded Presbyterian clergymen, gentlemen, and a few merchants.

The rich intellectual life of the University of Glasgow and its affiliated institutions resulted in notable achievements that brought the Glasgow Enlightenment



► Robert Foulis funded Glasgow's Academy of Arts, but it was as a printer of classical books that brought him most acclaim.



international attraction drawn from classes far removed from discourses delivered in the Literary Society, and the rare books of the Scottish Enlightenment.

Joseph Black's theory of latent heat was a product of his Glasgow days, and so, as we have seen, was the tandoemata, the first of James Watt's steam engines.

Yet for all its accomplishments, the Enlightenment that was fostered at the University of Glasgow was not free of problems and crises.

Perhaps because Glasgow's

university had more autonomy than most others during this period, its professors were continually engaged in power struggles and feuds against themselves. Professors John Aiken and James Muir were particularly aggressive and were involved in series of highly publicised quarrels, first and with others, but then they almost fought a duel after a bitter dispute for a year, and in later years each was expelled, leaving students who were disappointed of relatively minor transgressions.

Men of letters who could not speak for the university itself

as the physician John Stiel and the lawyer Samuel Smith and James Muir, Glasgow stilling at the time, were those who had to make their way in the world rather than under the aegis of a university.

For generations, the university stood against the grain of the social and economic changes that were sweeping through Scotland, and it was rarely triumphant.

Robert Watt, the Scottish inventor of the steam engine, was a professor at the University of Glasgow. His invention was a pamphlet. His friend John Anderson went further, a pamphlet, and then a legal action against the university for alleged

the university's failure to support a new way of thinking. The university was a means of creating a new way of thinking, and the university was a means of creating a new way of thinking. The university was a means of creating a new way of thinking, and the university was a means of creating a new way of thinking.

Even its disalignments, however, were in some respects a harbinger of the town's intellectual vitality. The university and the town's intellectual vitality were in some respects a harbinger of the town's intellectual vitality. The university and the town's intellectual vitality were in some respects a harbinger of the town's intellectual vitality.

AN EXPLOSION IN MASTERS OF ART

The slave market at Constantinople, with its subject matter, caught the attention of William Allan in 1838 and became an early example of European Orientalism.



As the Enlightenment developed rare talents emerged that took Scottish art in several directions to win respect throughout Europe



In 1729 Scotland's first art school, the Academy of St Luke, was founded in Edinburgh. Among the signatories of its charter were the painters William Aikman, James Norie and John Alexander, the poet Allan Ramsay and the architect William Adam.

This particular art school never achieved much status but it demonstrated a developing professional commitment to visual art from which Scotland has never looked back.

Its founders were distinguished. Aikman was a portraitist with excellent international contacts and he set the pattern for Scottish artists as members of a cosmopolitan Enlightenment intelligentsia, which continued throughout the century.

Alexander has left us an image of one of the key figures of the Enlightenment in his portrait of the Lord Provost of Edinburgh, George Drummond, with one of his cherished projects in the background, William Adam's Royal Infirmary.

But among Scottish painters there was also a keen sense of the relevance of the local and the rural, for example the work of the remarkable painter to the Grant family, Richard Watt, whose vigorous images captured all levels of Highland society.

Similarly James Norie and his family began the process of representing the detail of the landscape of Scotland.

The novelist Tobias Smollett called the Edinburgh of the Scottish Enlightenment 'a hotbed of genius', a description which gives some idea of the sheer vitality of Scottish intellectual and cultural life as it moved into the second half of the 18th century.

This was a time of intense activity not only for scientists and philosophers, but for artists and writers as well, not to mention the political classes and the aristocracy re-ordering their worlds in the wake of the Jacobite uprisings.

The finest portrait painter of the mid-century was Allan Ramsay (son of the poet), who

numbered among his friends the architect Robert Adam (son of William Adam) and the philosopher David Hume.

In due course Ramsay spent much of his time in London where his skill as a portrait painter served the needs of the resident Scottish aristocracy and, indeed, of royalty.

As a young man, following Aikman's example, Ramsay had studied in Rome and he revisited that city whenever he could. Scots were very much part of a wider European Enlightenment at this time, indeed one of Ramsay's most famous portraits is of the Swiss philosopher Jean Jacques Rousseau, a work which he painted for Hume.

We are fortunate indeed that Ramsay painted Hume also, giving us the images by which both philosophers are remembered today.

Another Scottish artist made his permanent home in Rome. Gavin Hamilton was a pioneer of the 18th century neoclassical movement in art, strongly influenced on the one hand by the antiquities of Rome and on the other by the mythological world of ancient Greece.

He was a skilled archaeologist and his academic concern with the ancient world is evident in his work. One major series of canvases illustrates passages from Homer's 'Iliad' for example, 'Achilles Lamenting the Death of Patroclus', which he painted in the 1760s.

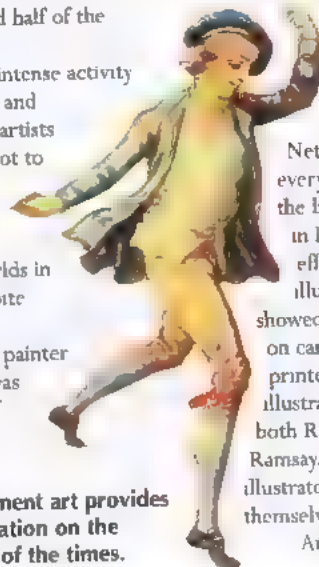
Hamilton's studio was a focus for younger Scottish artists visiting Rome, among them David Allan, who was in due course to make a remarkable contribution to the representation of everyday life in

Scotland in works such as 'A Highland Wedding at Blair Atholl', which dates from 1780.

Allan reinterprets the Netherlandish genre (i.e. everyday life) painting in the light of his experience in Rome, to produce an effective and elegant illustrative style. He showed this talent not only on canvas but also in printed form as an illustrator of the works of both Robert Burns and Allan Ramsay, senior. Today's Burns' illustrators still find themselves in his debt.

Another student visiting

■ Some Enlightenment art provides accurate information on the dress and styles of the times.



It was the great Sir David Wilkie who summed up the new horizon: 'No art that is not intellectual can be worthy of Scotland'

► Rome was Alexander Runciman, who on his return to Scotland in the early 1770s, painted a mural scheme for Sir James Clerk of Penicuik.

This scheme echoed Hamilton's interpretation of Homer, but instead of a classical Greek or Roman theme, Runciman instead illustrated the legends of the Celtic bard Ossian, as retold and embroidered by James Macpherson in the previous decade.

Unfortunately, this major work was lost in its entirety in a catastrophic fire at Penicuik House in 1899, but it can be reconstructed in the imagination to some extent through preparatory sketches such as *Ossian Singing*.

This exploration of both classical and folk subject matter was typical of the Scottish intellectual and artistic culture of the time. It is echoed in Burns's poetry and it is, of course, the poet's features which figure in the most familiar of all Scottish paintings of the Enlightenment period. That famous portrait was painted by Burns's friend Alexander Nasmyth in 1787.

Nasmyth was a fascinating character in his own right and is often referred to as the father of Scottish landscape painting.

He had other strings to his bow, including architecture and engineering. Indeed he helped to draw up plans for Patrick Miller's pioneering steam-boat, and both he and Burns were aboard on its maiden voyage on Dalswinton Loch in Dumfriesshire in 1788.

Nasmyth brought to his art a classically informed vision with which he idealised the form of Scotland's rivers, lochs and hills.

In this endeavour he built on the work of Jacob More, a painter who like Gavin Hamilton elected to

live most of his life in Rome. But before he settled there More had, in the early 1770s, pioneered a sophisticated unity of classical ideals and Scottish realities in a series of paintings of 'The Falls of Clyde'.

It was left to Nasmyth to take these insights further. Nasmyth's city views are of equal interest, for they are visual commentaries on the diversity of the city, its place in nature, and its changing status. Typical is his contrast of the planned structure of the New Town in Edinburgh complemented by the organic growth of the Old Town, all in the context of the volcanic geology which gives that city its underlying shape.

Where Nasmyth investigated urban form, his close contemporary Henry Raeburn focused on the portrayal of the people who helped to mould such cities. Raeburn's directness of vision and confident application of paint can still startle the viewer today, whether his subject is a tartan-clad clan chief such as Alasdair Macdonell of Glengarry, or a pioneering scientific thinker such as the geologist James Hutton.

A number of Raeburn's finest portraits were painted in the 1790s and these range in subject from the philosopher Thomas Reid to the fiddler and composer Niel Gow.

During the same period one can see his effectiveness as a painter of women, whether his subject is the beautiful Isabella Milreid or the mature and thoughtful Lady Clerk of Penicuik, painted in a remarkable double portrait along with her husband, Sir John.

Taken as a group Raeburn's portraits are not only a valuable record, but also, as with Ramsay, a significant contribution to the European art of the day.

Raeburn's work is complemented by the work of other portraitists such as the talented Archibald Skirving, who among much else made a drawing in red chalk of Nasmyth's portrait of Burns of such quality that it has often been thought to have been done from life.

Another portraitist who brings us into contact with the Scots of the Enlightenment was the medallion artist James Tassie, whose fused glass profiles include a rare image of the pioneering economist Adam Smith, who was Professor of Moral Philosophy at the University of Glasgow.

One must also mention the barber-turned-etcher John Kay. His witty images bring the Edinburgh of the 1780s to life. A new generation

of Scottish artists came to maturity in the early years of the next century. They include Alexander Carse, John Burnet and James Howe, all of whom took further the vernacular experimentation of David Allan. But most important of all was David Wilkie.

Wilkie was born in 1785 and in him we find a painter who drew together the experience of Scottish artists in the 18th century and

reformulated it for the 19th. While still a teenager at the Trustees' Academy in Edinburgh, he had painted the 'Chalmers Bethune Family' (1804), a group portrait of such remarkable perception that had Raeburn not still been in his prime, one feels that Wilkie would have been his natural successor.

Yet in the very same year Wilkie had also painted 'Pittlesie Fair', a vivid scene of village life set near his



birthplace in Fife, which owes much to David Allan's work and to earlier Netherlandish painting of similar scenes

The success of 'Pitlessie Fair' enabled Wilkie to finance an education at the Royal Academy in London, a city in which he made his fortune, numbering among his patrons the Duke of Wellington

Wilkie's development, along with his friend and contemporary William

Allan, of the painting of events from Scottish history, was of particular importance for the artists who were to follow him

An early example is his sketch of the 'The Preaching of Knox before the Lords of the Congregation' which dates from 1822. This probably acted as a spur for works by Allan such as 'The Murder of David Rizzio' from 1833

This growth in interest in the

depiction of scenes from Scottish history was in part a tribute to the novels of Sir Walter Scott. At the same time both Wilkie and Allan were well travelled in Europe and this is reflected in their works. Allan's 'Slave Market Constantinople' from 1838 is an early example of European orientalism.

But such works are not just a romanticisation of other cultures, they are also driven by a curiosity

about other times and cultures that is in the tradition of Enlightenment thinking

When – speaking at a student dinner in Rome – Wilkie commented that "no art that is not intellectual can be worthy of Scotland", he meant it

He was looking back to the values of the 18th century and pressing the claim that such values were part of the heritage of every Scottish artist ●

■ David Allan's 'The Penny Wedding' is not only rich in content, vitality and good humour, but it is also an important record of the way of life, celebrations and customs of the times.



Sheer agony of the

It was the whip or 'joug' for coal and salt serfs if they tried to desert. Wives and even un-born children could be tied to a single employer for their lives

One of the most potent images in Scottish social history is that of the degraded collier serfs.

These were the wretched men, women and children who eked out a miserable lifetime's existence in Scotland's coal mines.

The dismal picture is further complemented by the sight of man and woman coal bearers, carrying great loads of coal on their backs to the bottom. Workers in the important salt industry were also enslaved.

Work in both industries was hard

and dangerous. The levels in the coal mines were low and unlit. They were wet, but also prone to fire and explosion.

In the salt pans, the sea water had to be heated for 24-hour periods so that evaporation could take place. Semi-naked salters were incarcerated within their smoke- and steam-filled panhouses for lengthy periods.

Crumbling remains of these buildings can still be seen, on the north-east coast of Arran, for example, and at St Monans, in Fife.

Perhaps the most chilling artefact from the period of serfdom, however, is the brass collar which

can be seen today in the National Museum of Scotland.

This, it is alleged, was once worn by a collier slave – a humiliating and public mark of his lowly status.

The roots of the system lay in an Act of the Scottish Parliament of 1606, during the reign of James VI.

That a form of serfdom existed in Scotland from the early 17th century and throughout the 18th seems somewhat at odds with the idea of an Age of Enlightenment.

Older accounts describe horrendous conditions for the coal and salt workers. Some were bound to a particular colliery or saltwork



■ Blast: before Sir Humphry Davy produced his safety lamp in 1815 methane gas explosions killed hundreds of miners.

enslaved workers

for life. If they attempted to move to another pit on a different landed estate without permission from the original landlord's agent, soldiers might be sent to bring them back.

For the crime of leaving an employer, coal and salt workers could be imprisoned and even whipped.

Troublemakers were severely punished in the public stocks, or in the chains (they were chained by the neck), or in the landowner's stocks.

Children were working in the districts.

These could take the form of a small money payment, or a pair of shoes.

In one case in Fife in the early 18th century a man named John Russell not only bound himself and his current wife and children to a particular colliery, but also any subsequent wife he had, including unborn children.

Colliers and salters were sometimes sold, along with the works' buildings and machinery.

Life-binding was bad enough. Laws were passed in the Scottish Parliament in the 17th century

which ordered colliers and salters to work a six-day week. In 1701 they were explicitly excluded from legislation designed to give other Scots the right not to be thrown in prison without good cause.

The assumption was that their work was unskilled and therefore open even to beggars and vagabonds who could be forced to work in the pits or pans.

Some historians have claimed that there were parts of Scotland – Fife again stands out – where coal and salt workers were shunned by the rest of the community. The 'stigma of slavery', it is argued, made them a

'separate and avoided tribe'. At its most extreme this meant that they could not be married in church, or have their children baptised, or be buried in a Christian graveyard.

New research, however, carried on over the past 20 years or so, suggests that this picture of broken and bedraggled coal and salt workers may be more complicated.

Certainly their suffering has been exaggerated. For example, only one brass collar has ever been found, and there is no proof that these were ever worn by colliers.

They are more likely to have been worn by those guilty of serious



■ Flood: there was often no warning or escape. This grim picture illustrates the dangers of life underground in 1869.

► **crimes** Closer investigation shows that life-binding was far from universal and that working life in the coal mines or at the saltworks was not as regimented as has been suggested

Neither in the salt pans nor the collieries did workers feel obliged to fulfil the legal six day week. Practice varied around the country, but in some places days were taken off not only for weddings, births and funerals, but also on some fair days

The 'daft days' around New Year were also celebrated in many places, often with the blessing of masters who provided free ale

There was more movement of workers, too, than might have been expected. A list of 21 people employed at Strathore colliery on the Rothes estate in Fife in 1739 shows only one collier bound to that estate

The rest had entered freely from other collieries. The same list reveals that several Rothes men and their families had left

Hard evidence that coal and salt workers were outcasts from the church and the lower class community is almost impossible to find. Instead, there are numerous instances of colliers' and salters' marriages being blessed in the Kirk, and of burials in consecrated ground

In many places coal and salt workers lived alongside their neighbours from other occupations and shared their values and concerns, over the price of bread, for example, or the imposition by the heritors of an unpopular minister

In September 1750 colliers in and around Alloa 'assembled riotously' to



■ Some coalfaces were connected to the surface by a windlass, while other mines used a series of ladders.

The first strike action for higher wages and seeds of early trade unions can be traced to 17th century coal and salt combinations



prevent James Sim from taking charge of his new church. Some were even literate and wrote poetry

What can be concluded from this is how unwise it is to confuse the law with social reality. The laws were less effective than has been assumed

In fact, the coal and salt workers were amongst the first in Scotland to have taken collective action, to strike, in order to obtain higher wages

The first collier and salter

'combinations', or early trade unions, can be traced back to the mid-17th century, and they were far from unusual in the 18th. Examples include Dysart, Fife (1694), Cowden, Midlothian (1728) and Kulwinning and Irvine, Ayrshire (1747 and 1749).

They became even more numerous and hard to break from around 1760, as Scotland's Industrial Revolution got under way

Contrary to what used to be

thought, coal and salt workers were skilled and hard to supervise. They could and did gather underground, unseen, or around the panhouses, to discuss grievances and plan action against their master or grievance

Furthermore, because their work was skilled, and as few people were willing to volunteer for underground work, life-bound or otherwise, labour in the coal industry was in short supply

Coal hewers were highly valued,



■ Coal hewers wore broad leather belts attached to a chain to haul the coal hutch to the foot of the shaft for lifting.



Men and women often toiled semi-naked because of the tremendous heat underground. Boys as young as 12 years old learned to cut and haul coal, and many worked 12-hour days. Coal bearers (right) had to hoist a hundredweight in each load up their ladder system.

and now the... authority... were in the... their men together... about where best to... coal workers... and therefore a...

Remarkal... century the... workers, where demand... use, were almost... English colliers

This is where... made between serf... Enlightenment... thinking in Scotland... and Enlightenment... after turned...

One... Enlightenment... as David Hume was how... country like Scotland... the gap with England

Part of the answer... that wages and the... costs in Scotland were... Scotland could then compete... higher-priced rivals, in... England

It was thinking of this... influenced some of Scotland's leading coalmasters... around Glasgow and in Ayrshire who were competing for... in Ireland with coal from Cumberland

Men such as Archibald Smellie, of Easterhill, near Glasgow, and George Glasgow, a coalmaster at Irvine, campaigned to end the system in the early 1770s. Serfdom was deterring

new men (and women, wanted as bearers, who were even scarcer) from entering the coal industry

There were reports from some collieries of men working for only three or four days a week

Pressure to end life-binding came from coal workers themselves in Midlothian and parts of Fife, although others objected that freedom would result in a reduction in their conditions to those of day labourers

Ironically, however, the system was brought to an end because the laws which had brought about life-binding were no longer serving their purpose. This was to stop coal and salt workers moving from works to works in search of higher earnings

Accordingly, the Emancipation Act of 1775 included a clause designed to deter coal and salt workers from taking collective action. Even though this legislation also barred the recruitment of new workers on lifelong contracts, strikes continued and wages continued to rise. Another Act was passed in 1799, which this time outlawed collier combinations

Nevertheless, Scotland's coal workers, proud of their craft skills, continued to act collectively into the 19th and 20th centuries, while for their part coal and iron companies attempted to dilute the colliers' skills and so make it easier to bring new, unskilled recruits into the industry



The Englishman who found fame as a Scot

Flamboyant Sir Compton made us laugh, but he also had a serious side

He was born in West Hartlepool, County Durham, and his name was Edward Montague Compton. But he had Scottish roots and wanted to emphasise this by reverting to the family name of Mackenzie, which had been borne by his great-grandfather, a writer on history and theology, and by a great-great-aunt, Mary, who was a popular novelist of the early 19th century.

And so, although Compton Mackenzie's birth, upbringing, education and brief law training seem to establish him firmly as an Englishman, his inclinations were always governed by his Scottish ancestry.

This emerged powerfully in his later years. In fact, Mackenzie is regarded without question as a central figure in Scottish literature.

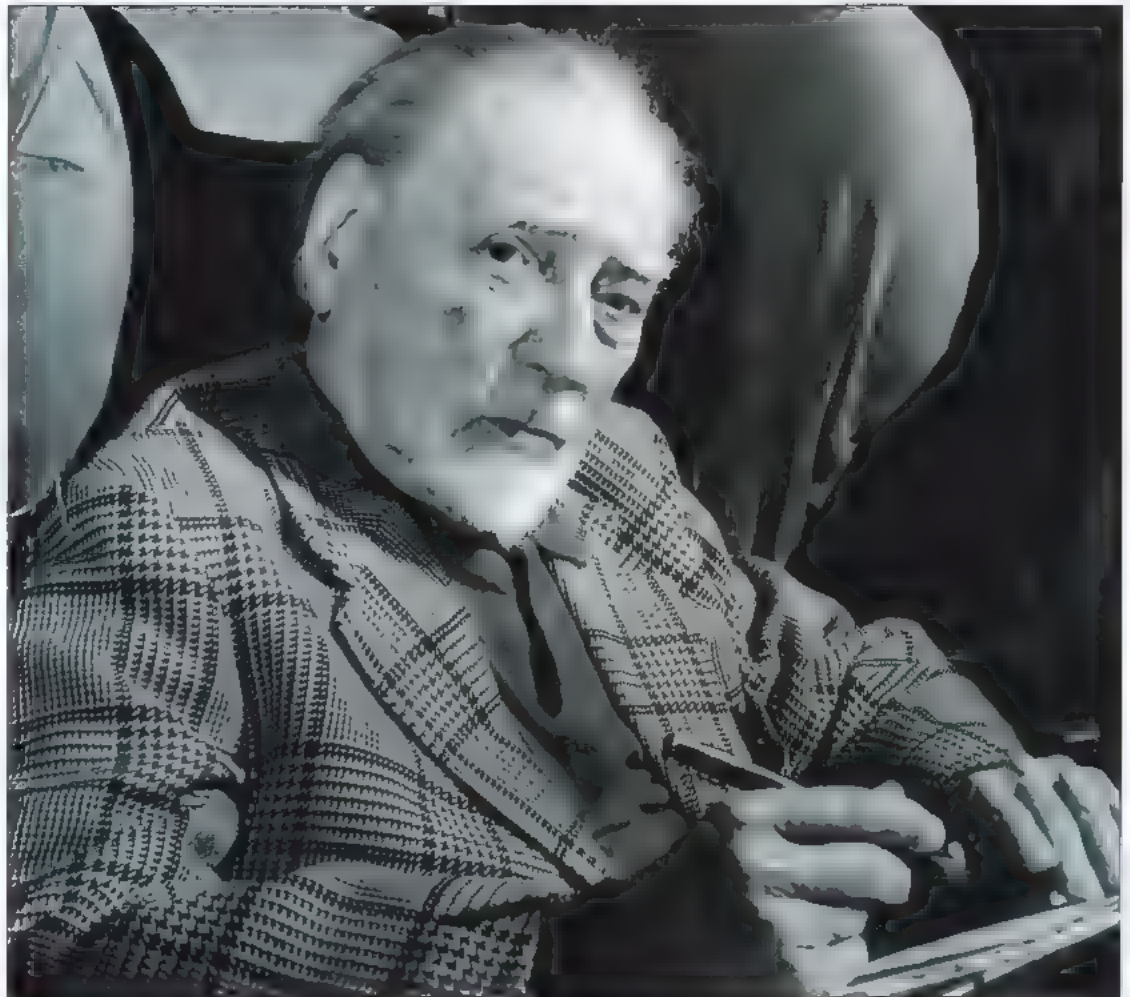
There was also American blood in Mackenzie's veins, but perhaps the most powerful influence was the theatre. His father and one grandfather were actors, while the other grandfather was one of the first American impresarios to move into the British scene, and was married to a successful playwright.

Born in 1883, Compton Mackenzie had a typical English middle-class education in London and at Magdalen College, Oxford, where he took an honours degree in modern history.

At the same time, he edited a student magazine and was business manager of the university dramatic society. From university he went to study law at the Inner Temple.

"But", he once said in an off-handed comment, "I soon gave that up for literature."

The pull of the stage was too strong and, inevitably, his first work was a play – 'The Gentleman in Grey' – first produced in Edinburgh in 1907. That year a volume of his poetry was also published. His first



■ Cheers! Sir Compton Mackenzie made the nation laugh with his best-selling novel 'Whisky Galore'.

novel, 'The Passionate Elopement', came out in 1911 and was an immediate success. It was followed by 'Carnival', a story of theatre life which became a stage play and silent film, and by the best-selling 'Sinister Street'.

World War One intervened, during which Mackenzie served with distinction at Gallipoli and as an intelligence officer in Greece. Afterwards, he showed a marked preference for living on islands.

A first home was on Capri, and he later bought the Channel Islands of Herm and Jethou. But in 1928 there was a sort of homecoming, when Mackenzie settled on Barra in the Outer Hebrides and became involved in politics as a founder member of the National Party of

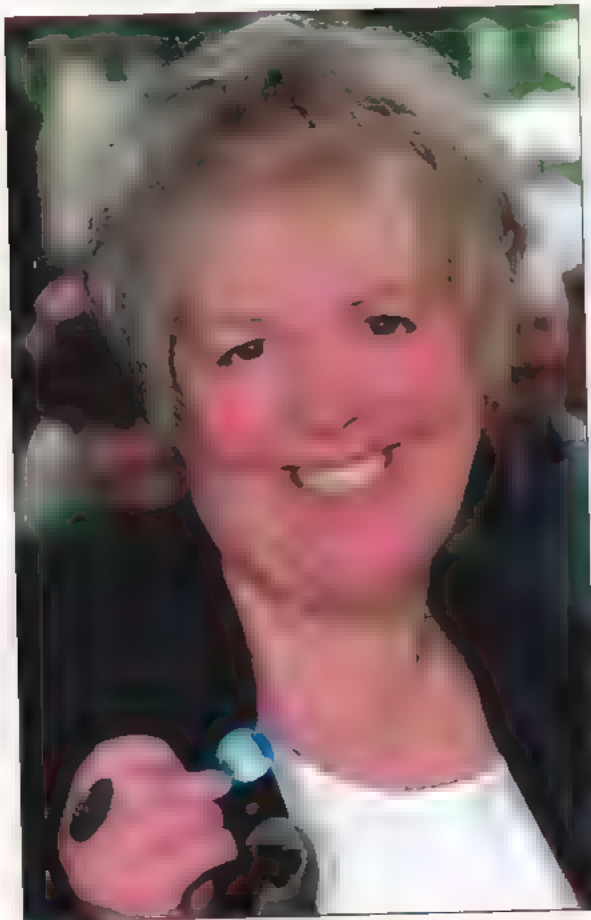
Scotland (now the SNP). Mackenzie was a close friend and admirer of the great independence-minded poet Hugh MacDiarmid. On a nationalist ticket, Compton Mackenzie was elected rector of Glasgow University in 1931, defeating the fascist baronet Sir Oswald Mosley in the race.

Although his output of novels was considerable, sometimes touching on political satire and eroticism, Mackenzie may well be best-known for his Scottish comic fiction. The most popular is probably 'Whisky Galore', published in 1947, and followed by 'Rockett's Gallop'.

These demonstrations of his powers of observation, however, were farce, and his comic writing was society. Despite the fact that he was once prosecuted for breaking the

Official Secrets Act in a book about wartime intelligence, Mackenzie received a knighthood in 1952.

He was not a member of the Establishment, however, and regarded the National Government of Great Britain with scorn. In 1940, following the abdication of King George VI, the greatest of Britain has suffered from the pet abominations of Queen Elizabeth (the Queen Mother), Oliver Cromwell" and eight years, Compton Mackenzie wrote a massive autobiography running to 10 volumes. Before he died in 1972 he moved to Edinburgh, living stylishly in the New Town, where he was feted as a great literary aristocrat. ●



■ Liz Lochhead has emerged as literary personality.

Liz is the lass of many parts

Poet, novelist, playwright, artist and wit
- she is Motherwell's own living legend

She has been described as 'the first fully professional Scottish woman poet of the modern period'. But Liz Lochhead, born in Motherwell in 1947, is also a writer of plays, songs and monologues, her work in any field marked by subtle wit and a sense of irony.

In a variety of ways she explores the theme of sisterhood and also of class in Scotland, often reinterpreting history and questioning long-held beliefs about the gender divide.

Lochhead studied at Glasgow School of Art and became an art teacher at Bishopbriggs High School, Glasgow.

She brought out her first collection of poems in 1972, 'Memo for Spring', and decided to write full time from 1979. Further published poetry emerged steadily, and her collected

verse came out in 1984 as 'Dreaming Frankenstein'. Meanwhile, however, she was making a powerful impact with her stage plays, such as 'Blood and Ice', which unpicked the moral dilemmas in the chaotic life of Mary Shelley, the famous author of 'Frankenstein'.

Lochhead's 'Mary Queen of Scots got her Head Chopped Off' gave a new slant on that romantic figure of Scottish history, and indeed the way in which women are portrayed in the chronicles of the past.

One of Liz Lochhead's thoroughly original plays was to translate Moliere into Glasgow working class patois.

Writing also for radio and television, and frequently invited to be writer-in-residence abroad, she emerged as a key figure in the Scottish literary revival before the start of the 21st century.

The Scottish history man

The key figures from our past come to vivid life in his 100 books

The history of Scotland was Nigel Tranter's abiding love. This was the motivation that drove him to become one of the country's most prolific authors, bringing out more than 100 books in 42 years, from 1936 until his death.

His great achievement was to look at the lives and accomplishments of major figures in Scotland's past, carefully researching the historical record yet breathing life into these people as characters in a novel.

Born in Glasgow in 1909 and educated at George Heriot's School in Edinburgh, Tranter trained as an accountant but turned professional writer at 25.

His first book was not a novel but an important study of Scottish buildings, *The Fortresses and Early Mansions of Southern*

Scotland. Nearly three decades later he followed this with an exhaustive five-volume work on Scottish fortified houses.

But at the same time his historical novels appeared in a steady flow, once at the rate of three in a year.

Some of these were trilogies on influential Scots like Robert the Bruce and the Stuart kings. Among others whose lives fed his imagination were Mary, Queen of Scots, the Duke of Montrose, Macbeth, Queen Margaret and St Mungo.

Tranter also wrote portraits of Scotland's distinctive regions. He was a familiar figure, out walking with his notebook, at the nature reserve near his home at Aberlady, East Lothian. He even wrote a book on what he found there, and called it 'Footbridge to Enchantment'.



■ Nigel Tranter with his notebook on his favourite footbridge at Aberlady.

Dress to kill was how it all began

Identify your own men from the enemy was the first step. Now heraldic industry is big business

Heraldry is an ancient and exact science, a very effective strain of formalised identity. It is used worldwide by nations and individuals. In Scotland we live among one of Europe's larger sources of coats of arms.

Heraldry identifies people, organisations and communities – and in doing so, heraldry marks, decorates and informs. From the dawn of civilisation, people have adopted and used symbols to explain their existence, beliefs and culture.

The Romans carried symbols and marked flags to identify themselves and their various legions, while the 9th-century forces of Charlemagne showed equal enthusiasm for icons of identity.

The Bayeux Tapestry depicting the Battle of Hastings in 1066 shows that specific forms of personal symbols were evident at the time of the Norman Conquest, and there is speculation that the tapestry points to the earliest notion of heraldry as we would accept it today.

The origins of Scotland's system of heraldry are more definite, for we can both date and identify our oldest extant example. This is the seal of Allan High Steward of Scotland (1177-1204), and it is shown on a charter dated at Melrose in 1190. The shield depicts the familiar fess chequy of the Stewarts, a blue-and-white chequered band across the middle.

These arms, heraldically described as Or a fess chequy Azure and Argent, are still used to this day in the 2nd and 3rd quarters of the coat-of-arms of Prince Charles as Duke of Rothesay. More familiarly, a police hat shows the fess chequy, remembering that an early Scottish monarch was closely associated with the governing town watch.

DRESSED TO KILL

For all its colourfulness, heraldry is an ancient and exact science. A practical function of heraldry was the identification of men on the battlefield. In the early days, men in fighting clothes were not easily distinguishable. The invention of a method of marking men, and their leaders started the heraldic tradition. The shield was a universal symbol of defence, so it was on the shield that heraldic symbols first appeared – in simple charges such as colour, cross and creature.

THAT HE WHO RUNS MAY READ

Heraldry is a method of visual communication, giving instant identification without the use of



letters. Heraldry creates an instant message both to the highly informed and the illiterate. To be effective, heraldry is best used in simplest form. In ancient times, a banner had to be simple enough to be read by a man astride a galloping horse.

So the Saltire, Scotland's national flag, incorporating a white diagonal cross on a blue ground, is one of the simplest heraldic devices anywhere in the world, rivalled only by Japan's Rising Sun.

AT THE COURT OF THE LORD LYON

The control of heraldry in Scotland is vested by law in the Lord Lyon King of Arms, currently Sir Malcolm Innes of Edingight. He holds an ancient office descended from the Seannachie of Celtic times and first mentioned in 1318 when an unnamed Lyon was inaugurated with the rank of knight at Arbroath Abbey.

As Lord Lyon, Sir Malcolm is a judge and Scotland's greatest Officer of State, and controls the granting and use of coats-of-arms. He is assisted in his duties by three heralds and three pursuivants.

Arms in Scotland are heritable property. So using the arms of another person, community, company or organisation is theft, and is an offence seriously pursued by Lyon Court. Scotland governs its heraldry by the strictest laws in the world. Scotland's Lyon Office is a court of law in daily session, one of only two in Europe with executive power. In granting and matriculating arms, the Lord Lyon ensures that no one coat-of-arms is like any other, for in Scotland every coat-of-arms must be different.

Each coat-of-arms is very individual property: there is no such thing in Scotland as a 'family coat-of-arms'. Several people of the same name showing the same coat-of-arms would not only cause confusion, but their actions would devalue the system, and dodge identity.

The need to guard individual identity was recognised four centuries ago when Parliament – that is, the Scots Parliament – passed an Act requiring the Lord Lyon King of Arms and his heralds to difference the arms of separate persons, and to record them in their books. This Public Register of All Arms and Bearings in Scotland has

been maintained non-stop since 1672.

A CURIOUS TONGUE

Heraldry is nothing if not exact. So a virtual language based on a curious mixture of English, Latin and Norman French has evolved. It's called blazon, a form of words which baffle the uninitiated. In reality it is no more difficult to learn blazon than, say, staff notation in music.

Blazon precisely describes a coat of arms in a way that there is no room for doubt or confusion. It avoids the near impossibility of trying to describe, for example, the familiar lion rampant of the Scots sovereign in concise everyday English; whereas blazon leaves no room for doubt: "Or, within a double tressure flory counter flory, a lion rampant Gules, armed and langued Azure."

The shield of the Royal burgh of Peebles is blazoned as: "Gules, three salmon counternaant in pale Proper." This heraldically describes a red (Gules) shield on which there are three salmon in their natural colours (Proper) seen horizontally, those in top and bottom facing left, with the middle one swimming to the right. Colour or tinctures, being an essential part of heraldry, are always given capital letters.

FORWARD WITH THE PAST

Heraldry is a growth business. There has never been a greater number of people and organisations pursuing arms as identity. According to the number of participants in the Olympic Games, there are 197 countries in the world. Few of these nations do not possess heraldry of some sort along with a presiding heraldic authority. Here in Scotland, the number of new coats-of-arms given by Lyon Office of the past 30 years equals the number of grants and matriculations over the previous 300 years. There is no indication of any let-up in demand, with the result that a new coat-of-arms appears every working day of the year.

Multinational organisations such as British



■ The Post Office's coat of arms

Airways, Tesco, Marks & Spencer, the BBC, Bank of Scotland and the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority use heraldry for everyday identification. Bluebird Buses display the Royal Arms on the sides of their double-deckers because they have the Royal Warrant to carry the Royal Family's luggage. Sometimes heraldry is positively flaunted: Glasgow and Aberdeen exuberantly parade their arms on signs, stationery, street furniture, buildings, badges, banners, bollards, books, buttons, vehicles, insignia, uniforms, and even litter bins.

HERALDRY IN USE

From prehistoric times, tribes and communities have rallied round totems embodying their unity and symbolising the authority of their chiefs. From the ancient earldoms such as Mar and Buchan grew counties like Aberdeenshire. All of Scotland's ancient 33 counties and most of our 201 burghs had coats of arms.

Companies have been quick to use heraldry as a means of corporate identity. The Bank of Scotland has employed its arms in daily use since they were granted in 1701, and is perhaps our oldest commercial user of heraldry. Two years ago, Aberdeen Harbour Board delineated the boundaries of its property by putting up street names showing the arms of the Board; GNER, the Great North Eastern Railway, displays its coat-of-arms on every carriage.

The hallmark of heraldry gives identity to schools (The High School of Glasgow and Harris Academy, Dundee); churches (St Nicholas Kirk, Aberdeen and Lochgilphead Parish Church); universities (St Andrew's, Glasgow Caledonian); societies (Braemar Royal Highland Society); learned bodies (Royal Society of Edinburgh, Scottish Tartans Society); sport (Scottish Football Association and clubs such as Queen's Park FC; Scottish Bowling Association and some two other dozen clubs); and 31 of our 32 local authorities. Heraldry, the medieval survivor, has become a potent modern symbol. ●

Apply for your coat-of-arms this way. . .

The process is not complicated. A person petitioning the Lord Lyon for a coat-of-arms is assumed to be virtuous and well-deserving, and the petitioner can be female or male for Scotland has always maintained sexual equality in heraldry.

Since the Court of the Lord Lyon is a court of law, applications are made by petition or formal request. This can be done by the person wishing to gain arms, by providing proof to the Lord Lyon who he or she is and asking for arms to be granted.

The petition sets out the petitioner's ancestry as far as

can be proved (as little as the current generation may be enough), showing each step of ancestry in the form of certificates of birth, marriages or certified extracts from documents such as census records or wills.

A grant of arms is heritable property and will be inherited by the petitioner's heir, usually the eldest son, and by his eldest son in turn, and so on. A younger child inherits the right to matriculate the arms with a slight difference added (for under Scots law no two people may bear the same arms), and he or she must petition separately for this to be done.

The petitioner should

carefully consider design and content of the arms before becoming permanently committed to them, since a grant of arms is for all time. Arms are based on surname, so if you are a Campbell, for which a chief's coat-of-arms already exists, then your personal Campbell heraldry will be visibly based on the chief's to show that you also bear his name, but with a difference to indicate that you are the particular Campbell you are, rather than the chief. The Lord



■ The Duke of Edinburgh's heraldry bears part of the city's arms.

.....
Lyon who judges what difference is appropriate. When this has been settled, the fee is payable, currently £1,285, and a herald painter from Lyon Office creates the beautiful Letters Patent. This colourful document displaying your arms is a formal deed from the Crown making you armigerous. The process from first application to final Letters Patent takes around six months. ●

Farming brothers in field of medicine



It was the sheer brilliance of their pioneering minds that took the Hunters from their humble East Kilbride farm. Their influence on surgery still continues, says biker historian David Ross

When most people think of the Enlightenment they imagine Edinburgh,

as the centre of thinking which made such progressive advances in science and the arts possible. But this was not always the case.

Two of the country's most famous medical pioneers were the brothers John and William Hunter, born into a family which farmed at Long Calderwood, near what was then the village of East Kilbride.

Their parents, John and Agnes, had a family of 10 children and scratched a living farming oats, barley and kail on their 75 acres.

Times were hard. Three of the children died in childhood, four died in their youth, and only John, William and one sister survived to adulthood.

Although born into humble stock, John remembered in later life: "I wanted to know all about the clouds and grasses, why the leaves changed colour in autumn. I watched the ants, bees, birds tadpoles and worms. I pestered people with questions about what nobody knew or cared about."

William was apprenticed to a local surgeon, and quickly made a name for himself with his radical new ideas in medicine. He eventually moved to London and began a school of anatomy. His fame steadily increased. Younger brother John, with his huge interest in biology, eventually decided to leave the farm and join his eminent



■ The Hunter Memorial at East Kilbride's Priestknowe roundabout.

brother in London. He borrowed one of the farm's plough horses and rode it all the way.

John and William, like many siblings, did not really hit it off together and there was often friction. But there was also a brilliance in both of their minds that yielded discoveries which still affect modern surgery and anatomy today.

William was a phenomenal collector of curios and artefacts, and amassed a fascinating collection, which he eventually bequeathed to Glasgow University in 1783. This forms the basis of the famous Hunterian Museum, within the University, which is open to the public. Most notable is its collection of coins, a huge part of which is Scottish in origin.

The Hunter brothers were two of the most famous men in London in their time. Other great thinkers flocked to hear their theories and discoveries.

They died, as they were born, 10 years apart, and are buried within Westminster Abbey. The farmhouse where they were born was a working farm till the 1960s, but has now been swallowed up by the ever-expanding new town of East Kilbride. It is a grade A listed building and, fortunately, has been converted into a museum. There are

computer terminals which you can use to explore the human body, audio-visual films describing the lives of the Hunters, and a collection of surgical instruments used in their time – plenty to catch the attention of adults and children alike.

The museum is open midday to 4pm weekdays, midday to 5pm weekends, April 1 till September 30. Admission is currently free. Hunter House, as the farm is now called, stands on Maxwellton Road in the Calderwood area of East Kilbride.

There is another Hunter connection elsewhere within East Kilbride. A large sandstone memorial was erected to them in 1937 on the edge of the original village. This memorial now stands beside Priestknowe Roundabout and sums up their careers succinctly:

"To the memory of the brothers William Hunter 1718-1783 and John Hunter 1728-1793. They were born at Long Calderwood and died in London after attaining the highest eminence in the sciences of medicine and biology.

"Their names will be held in reverent remembrance by a grateful posterity to all generations." ●

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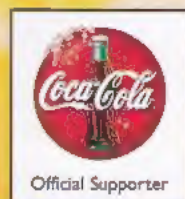
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